

Yājñavalkya's Characterization of the Ātman and the Four Kinds of Suffering in early Buddhism¹

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1.1. Books III and IV of the Br̥hadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad [BĀU]², traditionally entitled “Yājñavalkya-Kāṇḍa”, form a consistent legend as a whole, a quasi drama about this sage. Their contents are closely connected with materials, which are found in Volume X and XI of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa [ŚB] and Book II of the BĀU.

Book III can be regarded as a kind of summary of the preceding opinions in the history of speculation on *puruṣa*-, *brāhmaṇ*- and *ātmān*- . It is dramatized into a scene of the Brahmodya (theological disputation) held by King Janaka in which famous priest-scholars participate, among them Yājñavalkya and Śākalya. This framework as well as some parts of its contents (e.g. questions about the number of the gods: III 9,1–9) are based on Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa XI 6,3 (~ Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa [JB] II 76f.). The Puruṣa-doctrine of Vidagdha Śākalya (III 9,10–17) reflects the one which Dr̥ptabālaki Gārgya represents before King Ajātaśatru in BĀU II 1,2–13.

Book IV consists of three dialogues: two between Yājñavalkya and King Janaka (Chapters 1–2 and 3–4) and one between Yājñavalkya and his wife Maitreyī on the occasion of his renunciation (*pra-vraj*) of the world (Chapter 5). This last one seems to have been taken from BĀU II 4. The Book is based on the whole upon the discussion about the Agnihotra-offering including Janaka's Five-Fire-Doctrine in ŚB XI 6,2. Its traces are clearly observed especially in the explanation of Puruṣa and Virāj (IV 2,2–4) at the opening of the second dialogue (IV 3,1), and in the questions about *jyotiṣ*- ‘light’ (IV 3,2–7). Yājñavalkya's denial of the necessity of a son in III 5,1 and IV 4,26 (in the Kāṇva recension) 22 as well as his renunciation of the world in IV 5,2; 25 (K 2; 15) can be regarded as a counterstroke to Janaka's conclusion in his Five-Fire-Doctrine (ŚB XI 6,2,10), which identifies the daily deeds in the secular life with the Agnihotra-offering itself. — As further possible sources of components of this Book are: ŚB X 5,2 (mystiques on the Agnicayana) for the theory of the Puruṣa in the right eye (IV 2,2–3) via BĀU II 3; Ajātaśatru's doctrine (BĀU II 3) on the speculation about sleep (IV 3); ŚB X 6,3 (Śāṇḍilya's teaching) for the qualification of the Ātman

¹ The paper is based on the author's article in Japanese “Yājñavalkya no *ātmān*- no keiyōgo to Buddha no shiku”, *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 44-2 (1996) pp. 887–879. This present form is a revised and enlarged version, based on discussions with Junko SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ and her articles, especially: “Das Jenseits und *iṣṭā-pūrtā*- ‘Wirkung des Geopferten-und-Geschenkten’ in der vedischen Religion”, *Indoarisch, Iranisch und die Indogermanistik*. Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft vom 2. bis 5. Oktober 1997 in Erlangen, Wiesbaden 2000, pp.475–490, cf. also her article with the same title in Japanese in *Indoshisō to bukkyōbunka (Indian Thoughts and Buddhist Culture)*. Essays in Honour of Professor Junkichi Imanishi on His Sixtieth Birthday, Tōkyō 1996, pp. 862–882. The manuscript was originally written in the spring of 2000 for an omnibus volume of Japanese Indology which has not yet been published till today.

² Br̥hadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad is transmitted in two recensions: Mādhyandina (M) and Kāṇva (K). The citations in this paper rest on the Mādhyandina recension, which is deemed on the whole more original than the Kāṇva, concerning the matters relevant to the subject.

(M[ādhyandina recension] IV 4,6f., K 5f.) ³.

The famous formula *sá esá néti néti ātmā* ‘That is this (well known) *ātman* [which is described] “not ...”, “not ...”’ (see below, citation 2) appears in III 9,28 (K 26), IV 2,6 (K 4), IV 4,27 (K 22), and once more, only in the Kānya IV 5,15, always concluding a discussion. This phrase which characterizes the Yājñavalkya-Kāṇḍa also seems to issue from Book II: *āthāta ādeśāḥ | néti néti. ná hy ètasmād iti néty anyát páram ásti* ‘Then the assertion (what it is) [of this, Ātman = *bráhmaṇ-* = *púrusa-*] is: “not ...”, “not ...”. Because there is beyond this one no other thing [that could be called] “so (: this is ...)” [nor] “not so (: this is not ...)”’ (M II 3,11, K 6). This sentence in BĀU II reminds us once again of the concluding word in Janaka’s Five-Fire-Doctrine: *nátaḥ páram astūti hovāca* ‘There is nothing beyond this’, said [Janaka]’ (ŚB XI 6,2,10).

1.2. The leitmotiv of the two dialogues between Yājñavalkya and Janaka (IV 1–2, and 3–4) is the fear about one’s state after death,⁴ as shown also in the legend of Bhṛgu (see below 3.). This theme appears clearly in the somewhat ironical question of Yājñavalkya, which, placed in the middle of the first dialogue, introduces his teaching:

(1) BĀU-M IV 2,1 (ŚB XIV 6,11,1) ~ BĀU-K IV 2, 1

... yáthā vái samrāṇ mahántam ádhvānam esyán ráthām vā návam vā samādádītaivám evàitábhír upaniṣádbhiḥ samáhitātmásy. evám víndāraka ādhyáḥ sánn adhītarávēda uktópaniṣatka itó vimucyámānah kvā gamiṣyásítī. náháṁ tād bhagavan veda yátra gamiṣyámítī. átha vái te 'háṁ tād vakṣyāmi yátra gamiṣyásítī. brávītu bhágavān iti. ||

[Yājñavalkya said:] “As indeed, oh great king, he who is going to make a long journey would take up a chariot or a ship to himself, just so you are the one whose self (*ātman*) is equipped with these profound theories (*upaniṣad*). Standing thus at the top [of the people] [and] wealthy, where will you go as the one who has learned the Veda [and] been taught the Upaniṣad, when you are released from this world?”. [Janaka said:] “I don’t know, sir, where I will go to”. [Yājñavalkya:] “Then I will verily tell you where you will go to”. [Janaka:] “You, sir, shall please speak”.

The clever king, thirsting for the knowledge through which one can release oneself from this fear, forces Yājñavalkya with skillful questions step by step to reveal his more profound and elevated doctrine about Ātman. Thus, both dialogues are concluded with Yājñavalkya’s confirmation that the king has reached *ábhaya-* (nt.) ‘absense of fear, freedom from fear’. The

³ Cf. T. GOTŌ, “Zur Lehre Śāṇḍilyas —Zwischen Brāhmaṇa und Upaniṣad—” (*Langue, style et structure dans le monde indien*. Centenaire de Louis Renou. Actes du Colloque international, Paris, 25–27 janvier 1996, éd. N. Balbir et G.-J. Pinault, Paris 1996 [1997], pp. 71–89) p. 81. (The same title appeared in Japanese in: *Indoshisō to bukkyōbunka. Essays in Honour of Professor Imanishi* [see n.1], pp. 844–860.).

⁴ In this respect, we notice a striking resemblance between BĀU IV and the dialogue of Buddha and Ajātasattu (Ajātaśatru) in the Sāmaññaphalasutta (Dīghanikāya II in Pāli). P. DEUSSEN, *Sechzig Upaniṣad’s des Veda* (1897, ³1938) p. 456, has already pointed out the possibility that the opening part of the “six heretics” of the Sāmaññaphalasutta may have been modeled after the style of BĀU IV 1(–2), where the opinions of the six masters about the question ‘What is *brahman*’ are introduced by the king in a dialogue with Yājñavalkya. The similarity between the two stories is, however, not restricted to their framework, but also to their chief motive. What both kings seek for is to overcome the fear about one’s state after death. Cf. also J. SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ, *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 49-2 (2001) 958–953.

king rewards him for this with his kingdom and himself. The first dialogue closes as follows:

(2) BĀU-M IV 2,6 (ŚB XIV 6,11,6) ~ BĀU-K IV 2,4

sá esá néti néty ātmā. | ágrhyo ná hí grhyáté, 'śīryo ná hí síryaté, 'sangó 'sito ná sajyáté ná vyáthaté. *ābhayaṁ* vái janaka prāptō 'sūti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ. sá hovāca janakó váideho. námas te yājñavalkyá-. *ābhayaṁ* tvá gacchatād yó no bhagavann *ābhayaṁ* vedáyasa. imé videhá ayám ahám asmiñi. ||

"That is the self [in issue] [that is described as] "not ... ", "not ... ". [It is] not to be grasped, for it is not grasped; not to be broken, for it does not break; without attachment, unbound, it does not cling, nor stagger.⁵ The freedom from fear, verily, oh Janaka, you have [already] reached", said Yājñavalkya. Then said Janaka, the chief of the Videha: "Homage to you, oh Yājñavalkya. The freedom from fear shall go (come) to you, sir, who makes us know the freedom from fear. Here are the [people of] Videha; here I am [for you]".

At the end of the second dialogue this key-word *ābhaya-* appears once again and is identified with *bráhma-* (nt.). It deserves attention that an adjective *abháya-* 'not-being afraid, unfearing' is used beside the neuter *ābhaya-* 'absence of, freedom from fear' in the same passage (cf. n.12):

(3) BĀU-M IV 4,29–31 (ŚB XIV 7,2,29–31) ~ BĀU-K IV 4,23–25⁶

sá vā esá mahán ajá ātmā | annādó (ātmānnādó) vasudānah. sá yó haivám annādám vasudānam véda, vindáte⁷ vásu. ||29|| sá vā esá mahán ajá ātmā | ajáro (ātmājáro) 'máro 'bháyo 'mýto bráhmá-. *ābhayaṁ* vái janaka prápto 'súti yājñavalkyaḥ. sò 'hám bhágavate videhán dadāmi mām cāpi sahá dásyāyeti. ||30|| sá vā esá mahán ajá ātmā | ajáro (ātmājáro) 'máro 'bháyo 'mýto bráhmá-. *ābhayaṁ* vái bráhmá-. *ābhayaṁ* hí vái bráhma bhávati yá evám véda. ||31||

"As such, verily, this great unborn⁸ ātman⁹ is a food-eater, a wealth-giver. The one, who knows the

⁵ For this phrase cf. T. GOTŌ, "Ai. *utsaṅgá-* und Verwandtes" (*Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft*, 39, 1980, pp. 11–36), p. 27 with notes.

⁶ The order of sections and the wording are different in the Kāṇva recension: K IV 4,23 (~ M IV 4,30) *esa brahma-lokah samrād enam prāpito 'sūti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ. so 'ham bhágavate videhān dadāmi mām cāpi saha dásyāyeti*. Section 24 is nearly equivalent to M IV 4,28–29. Section 25 (~ M IV 4,31) *sa vā esa mahān ajā ātmājáro 'máro 'mýto 'bháyo brahmā-*. *ābhayaṁ* vai *brahmā-*. *ābhayaṁ* hi vai *brahma bhávati ya evam veda*. — In K IV 4,23 appears *prāpito* 'made to arrive' (VAdj. of the causative) for M *prāptō*. The 18 Up. (Ed. LIMAYE–VADEKAR) supplies a dañoá (|) behind *samrād* and considers *enam* to be the beginning of the next sentence. *enam* is, however, an enclitic, which ought to be found at the second position in a sentence. The punctuation might rather be before *samrād*, but the position just behind the vocative is also regarded as the beginning of a sentence. In any case, we have here an exceptional sentence structure, cf. T. GOTŌ, "Zur Geschichte vom König Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa (Chāndogya-Upaniṣad IV 1–3)" (*Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 20, Festschrift Paul Thieme, 1996, pp. 89–115) p.94 n.13.

⁷ When a main clause following a relative clause begins with a verb, the verb has the accent (*i.e.* it has a value of the sentence beginning). See examples in A. MINARD, *La Subordination dans la Prose Védique*, Paris 1936, pp. 180f.: §658.

⁸ What is not born will not die. *ajá-* denotes a nature beyond genesis and termination (in opposition to the axiom: those which have been made are impermanent). This is attested as an essential attribute of a universal principle already in the RV.

food-eater¹⁰, the wealth-giver in this way, finds the wealth for himself. As such, verily, this great unborn *ātman* is unaging, undying, unfearing (*abháya-*) [and] immortal, [and is] *brahman*. The freedom from fear (*ábhaya-*), verily, oh Janaka, you have [already] reached”, said Yājñavalkya. “I here give you, sir, the (people and country of) Videha, and also myself together to serve you as a servant”, [said Janaka]. That is, verily, this great unborn *ātman* [which is] unaging, undying, unfearing [and] immortal, [and is] *brahman*. *brahman* is, verily, the freedom from fear. He who knows thus, indeed, makes *brahman*, just as the freedom from fear, his own¹¹.

1.3. The Ātman-doctrine serves, after all, as means to deliver oneself from the fear about the state after death. In text (3) quoted above, we find the following four words qualifying the Ātman: *ajára-* ‘unaging’, *amára-* ‘undying’, *amýta-* ‘immortal’ and *abháya-* ‘not-being afraid, unfearing’.¹² These four qualifiers¹³ are no mere epithets for a decorative modification, but express the essential qualities of the Ātman which transcends this very fear. At first glance, however, *amára-* ‘undying’ and *amýta-* ‘immortal’ seem to have no clear difference in meaning. It appears also that no special attention has been yet given to explain the necessities of the two terms. This paper aims to elucidate this problem through finding clues in the philosophical background of the epoch. For this purpose we must retrace at first the

⁹ The three words *mahán ajá ātmá* form a unit, which is interpreted here as a subject. Though it is also possible to take them for a predicate (: ‘that is, verily, this great unborn *ātman*, [which is] unaging, undying, unfearing, immortal, [and is] *brahman*’), this seems less suitable to the context. Cf. BĀU-K IV 4,22 *sa vā eṣa mahán aja ātmā yo 'yam vijñānamayaḥ prāneṣu. ya eṣo 'ntar hr̥daya ākāśas tasmiñ chete* ‘This, which consists of the discriminative faculty among the vital faculties (organs), that, verily, is this great unborn *ātman*. It lies in this space, which is inside the heart’ (BĀU-M differs; the same sentence found in BĀU-K/M II 1,17 [ŚB XIV 5,1,17] seems to be the origin for -K IV 4,22). Cf. also BĀU-M 23 = -K 21 (Śloka) *ajá ātmá mahán dhruváḥ* ‘the unborn *ātman*, the great, the firm’.

¹⁰ For the meaning of ‘food-eater’ (*annādá-, attár-*) as a ruling person in opposition to *áんな-, ādyà-, adyámāna-* in the society cf. W. RAU, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien. Nach den Brāhmaṇa-Texten dargestellt*, Wiesbaden 1957, pp. 34f.

¹¹ Commonly interpreted: ‘The one who knows thus, verily, becomes *brahman*, which is even freedom from fear’. Here is, however, to be assumed *idám bhū*-construction (K. HOFFMANN, *Aufsätze zur Indoiranistik II*, Wiesbaden 1976, pp. 557–559): ‘the one comes to rule, to control *brahman*’, ‘the one makes *brahman* his own’.

¹² *ajára-, amára-, abháya-* can be interpreted as determinative compounds, the latter member of which retains its verbal meaning unchanged (cf. WACKERNAGEL–DEBRUNNER, *Altindische Grammatik* [AiG], II-1 p. 215). Pāṇini IV 2,116 teaches the accent of *ajára-, amára-, amítra-, amýta-* as Bahuvrīhi in this order. *amýta-* (‘immortal, having no death at all; nt. sg.: immortality’ and ‘ambrosia, nectar, the nourishment of the gods’) goes back, including its accent-place, to the Proto-Indo-Iranian (cf. av. *aməša-* < *n-mýto->), and was most probably formed as a Bahuvrīhi in its origin (cf. AiG II-1 pp. 226, 295). *ábhaya-* (in citation 2, and 3) with initial accentuation (looking like Karmadhāraya-Tatpuruṣa) is used in the Rgveda and later as an adjective ‘free from fear, safe’ and substantive ‘absence of fear (i.e. danger), freedom from fear, safety’ in the neuter singular. For *amára-* cf. 5., at the bottom.

¹³ This set of the four words occurs also in BĀU-M III 8,8 (lacking in the Kāṇva) among other negated qualifiers of *etád ... akṣáram* ‘this imperishable one’.

understanding of the Veda concerning the state after one's death. For the conclusion see below 5., at the end. The result will then be compared with the enumeration of four kinds of suffering in early Buddhism, so that its significance in the history of ideas may become clear.

2. The teachings ascribed to Yājñavalkya deserve to be regarded as the highlight of the philosophy of the Upaniṣad, into which preceding ideas flow all together. And from there issue various theses presented by the *brāhmaṇas* and *śramaṇa*, i.e. the traditional thinkers from the priest class on the one hand, and freethinkers and founders of new religious streams on the other. The discussions on *ātmán-* ‘the eternal substance of the self’, which continues to exist also after one's death, are based on the axiom of *kárman-* ‘what one does, deeds’ which determines one's state after death, as well as that of *samsāra-* ‘transmigration, perpetual succession of births and deaths’ conditioned by the Karman.¹⁴ All those ideas have their origin in ritualistic speculation about *iṣṭāpūrtá-* in the Brāhmaṇa. Let us here take a backward glance to see how those conceptions came into being.

In the earliest stage it was generally admitted that a person who has performed enough sacrificial rituals and has duly rewarded priests on earth will go after death to the world of the fathers (*pitár-*) in the heavens, such as Yama's paradise described in R̄gveda I and X, where he lives in ease and comfort for ever. There he recovers his *iṣṭāpūrtá-*¹⁵, i.e. ‘the offered (to the gods) and donated (to the priests)’ by him in the previous life, namely, ‘the effect of the offerings and donations’ belonging to him. It is his *iṣṭāpūrtá-* that composes the life after death, provides him with celestial food and body. In the course of time this optimistic vision was threatened by the fear that his *iṣṭāpūrtá-* might be exhausted; this means re-dying *punar-mṛtyú-*¹⁶ in heaven, and accordingly, re-birth on earth. How high among the heavens can one ascend, how long and in which conditions can one stay there, and into which state of

¹⁴ The word *samsāra-* itself does not appear in Vedic, but only after Katha- and Śvetāśvatara-Up. — An existence situated in this endless chain of Samsāra cannot be denoted as “a man”, “a person”, or “a human being”, because a (re-)birth into the human state is only conditioned by *karman* accumulated in one's respective “bank account”. From this point of view we can probably explain the origin of the Buddhist term *sattva-* (cf. E. WINDISCH, *Buddha's Geburt und die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung*, Leipzig 1908, pp. 12, 27, 49.) as masculine: The neuter *sattvá-* ‘being-ness, existence, die Wesenheit’ (TS-prose +) was personified and masculinized, so that the Buddhists could express the subject in Samsāra without using the word *ātmán-*; cf. below nn. 23, 37.

¹⁵ A dvandava-compound of *iṣṭá-* ‘offered (to the gods, and perhaps also to the fathers, ancestors, in the sacrificial rituals)’ from *yaj*, and *pūrtá-* ‘given, gifted, donated (to the priests as *dákṣiṇā-* ‘ritual fee’ or other gifts)’ from *par^j/pṛ*. It is used usually in the singular (collective), sometimes also in the dual. Cf. J. SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ, op. cit. (above n.1), pp. 475f.

¹⁶ The word *punar-mṛtyú-* itself occurs in the Śatapatha-, Taittirīya-, Jaiminīya-, and Kauśitaki-Brāhmaṇa, Śāṅkhāyana-Āranyaka, etc. On the passages, in which the concept is definitely stated, see S. LÉVI, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas*, Paris 1898, ²1966, pp. 95–97, P. HORSCH, *Asiatische Studien* 25 (1971) p. 136f., cf. also Y. IKARI, ‘Rinne to gō’ (*samsāra* and *karman*) in: *Iwanami Kōza Tōyō Shisō* 6, *Indo Shisō* 2, Tōkyō 1988, pp. 276–306.

existence is one to be reborn in the next life on earth: all these questions are determined mechanically by the quality and quantity of one's *iṣṭāpūrtá*- accumulated during one's former life. That was a most urgent subject for inquiry in the Brāhmaṇa period. Measures for getting out of re-dying were searched for. The following passage is probably the oldest clear attestation of this conception:

(4) Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā I 8,6: 123,18ff.

yó vái bahú dadivān bahv ījānō 'gním utsādāyate, 'ksít. tát vái tásya tát. ījānā vái sukṛto 'mūn lokám nakṣanti. té vā eté yán nákṣatrāṇi. yád āhír, jyótir ávāpādi táraकावापादिति, té vā eté 'vapadyanta. āptvā sthité tā idām yathālokám sacante yadāmūtaḥ pracyávanté. 'tha yó bahú dadivān bahv ījānō 'gnihotráṁ juhóti darśapūrṇamāsáu yájate cāturmāsyáir yájate bahúni satrány upáiti, tásya vā etád akṣayyám áparimitam. tiró vā ījānād yajñó bhavati. tát ābhýām evāgnibhyām dagdhavyāḥ. svám vā etád iṣṭám anvārohati.

If one, verily, after having given much (to the priests), having offered much (to the gods) (*i.e.* performed many rituals) for himself, sets aside [his ritual] fire (by his death), [his *iṣṭāpūrtá*-] is not-perishing [with his death] (*aksít*)¹⁷. As such (not-perishing), verily, it (*iṣṭāpūrtá*-) belongs to him. Having performed their rituals, verily, reach the righteous (good-doing men) the yonder world. What the constellations are, they, verily, are these [men]. When [people] say: "A light has fallen down", "A star has fallen down", these [men], verily, fall down as such. After having reached and stayed [there], they follow here [the earth] according to their own (acquired) world, as soon as (or: always when) they fall out from the yonder world. If one, on the other hand, after having given much, having performed many rituals for himself, offers the Agnihotra, performs the New- and Fullmoon sacrifices, performs the Fourmonth-sacrifices [and] participates in many Soma-sessions, [then] this immeasurable, imperishable (*akṣayyá*-) one (*:iṣṭāpūrtá*-), verily, belongs to him. The ritual, verily, becomes apart (hidden) from him who has performed his rituals. Therefore he is to be burnt with these very two fires (Āhavanīya and Gārhapatya). Therewith (by way of these two fires) he ascends towards his performed ritual (*iṣṭá*-) afterwards.¹⁸

Two types of sacrificers (*yájamāna*-) are compared in this important passage. The first one performs many rituals and makes generous donations, but only within the limits of the Grhya rituals. His *iṣṭāpūrtá*- 'the effect of the offered and the given' continues to exist after his death but is limited to a certain period, so that he, having become a star in a lower heaven, must fall down into a certain sphere on earth according to the condition that again his *iṣṭāpūrtá*- determines. The second one performs many Śrauta rituals in the capacity of Āhitāgni, *i.e.* one who has settled his sacred fires (two in this case: Āhavanīya and Gārhapatya) which are required for a Śrauta ritual. His *iṣṭāpūrtá*- is everlasting, so that he can enjoy eternal bliss in the highest heaven. The Śrauta rituals are recommended in this

¹⁷ *akṣít* is probably an artificial formation for 'not-passing away' in the sense of 'not perishing with one's death' in contrast to the usual adjective *akṣayyá*- 'imperishable', which is not conditioned and therefore usually means 'never to perish, everlasting', as is actually the case 4 lines below. See J. SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ, op. cit. (see above, n.1), p. 489. *iṣṭāpūrtá*- has been rightly pointed out as the subject to be understood here by H.W. BODEWITZ, *The daily and evening offering (Agnihotra) according to the Brahmanas*, Leiden 1976, p. 161.

¹⁸ The offered sacrifices, and the given donations or ritual fees ascend to the highest heaven by way of the fire(s) set for the Śrauta rituals. Only passing this way a sacrificer can attain that place. Cf. J. SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ, op. cit. (above n.1), pp. 476ff.

somewhat threatening way for the sake of release from re-dying.

Besides reflections on the relation between the effect of ritual deeds and re-dying (and consequently re-birth), we find in the Brāhmaṇas a notion that ritual acts on earth compose one's *ātmán-* 'self' in heaven.¹⁹ In this context Ātman means not only a spiritual principle of an individual as seen in the Upaniṣads, but also a concrete, material subject in the next stage of existence, *i.e.* a living body in the yonder world. Śāṅḍilya's doctrine on Agnicayana (ŚB X 6,3) may be instructive in this respect, where the word is used in the sense of 'body' of an eagle into the form of which the altar is piled up, as well as of 'self, subject-substance in the next existence'.²⁰

3. The well known legend of Bhṛgu, transmitted in two versions, ŚB XI 6,1 and JB I 42–44, demonstrates a transition of the notion about the yonder world, which took place during the Brāhmaṇa period. According to the ŚB, Bhṛgu goes forth in five directions on the orders of his father Varuṇa: east, south, west, north and northeast. He saw men tormented by men in the first four directions. Those are the scenes in which trees, grass, animals and water, taking human forms, revenge themselves in the yonder world on those who have tormented them in this world. In the last direction he saw a beautiful (*kalyāṇī-*) and a excessively beautiful woman (*ātikalyāṇī-*), representing respectively confidence (*śraddhā-*) and non-confidence (*āśraddhā-*), as well as a black man with a staff, representing anger (*kródha-*; see below). According to the JB version, Bhṛgu had been deprived of breath by Varuṇa and visited six places in the world after death; their locations are not explicitly given.

Since early days sacrificial rituals are regarded as slaughter of the offerings such as Soma, cattle (Paśu) or grain (Haviryajña), cf.:

(5) ŚB II 2,2,1 = IV 3,4,1 = XI 2,2,1

ghnánti vā etád yajñám | yád enām tanváte. yán nv evá rájānam abhiṣuṇvánti tát tám ghnanti. yát paśūn samjñapáyanti viśásati tát tám ghnanty. ulūkhalamusálābhýām dṛśadupalābhýām haviryajñám ghnanti.||

They verily slay this sacrifice, when they stretch it for themselves (*i.e.* perform it). Just when they press the King (*i.e.* Soma) out, then they slay him. When they make an (sacrificial) animal to agree [to be offered] (*i.e.* kill), [and] order [to cut it] apart, then they slay it. By means of a mortar and a pestle, by means of two millstones they slay Haviryajña (grain-sacrifice).

it seems very probable that the black man, personified anger, in the legend of Bhṛgu stands for the Haviryajña in this citation. In the course of time this sort of guilt complex became stronger and stronger. We find also in ŚB XII 9,1,1 the conception, that what we eat in this world will eat us in the yonder world in return. Those sins are expiated by the performance of

¹⁹ Cf. Makoto FUSHIMI, 'Ātman as Produced in Vedic Rituals', *Studies in the History of Indian Thought*, No. 7, Kyōto 1995, pp. 36–50 (in Japanese).

²⁰ Cf. T. GOTŌ, "Zur Lehre Śāṅḍilyas" (above n.3), especially p. 79f.

the Agnihotra, which presupposes setting up of the special fires for the Śrauta rituals.

What attracts our attention in Bhṛgu's story, especially in the version of the ŚB, is that the worlds which Bhṛgu visited when still alive, are situated on the same level as our world, *i.e.* on earth. It follows that they are not worlds in heaven, which follow directly one's death on earth as described in the early Brāhmaṇas, but places of existence into which one is reborn after re-dying in heaven. Their stay in heaven is no longer in question, perhaps because it lasts only momentarily. The notion which is later called Samsāra (→ n.14) has now acquired crucial importance.

4. A summary of the orthodox views of “*samsāra*” in the Upaniṣads is given in the theory ascribed to Yajñavalkya in the BĀU-M IV 4,3–5 (ŚB XIV 8,2,3–5) ~ -K IV 4,2–4. This commences with the scene of dying:

(6) BĀU-M IV 4,3 (ŚB XIV 8,2,3) ~ BĀU-K IV 4,2

tásya haitásya | hídayasyágram prádyotate. téna pradyoténaisá ātmá niśkrāmati cakṣuṣtó vā mūrdhnó vānyébhyo vā śarīradeśébhyas. tám utkrāmantam prāṇò 'nūtkrāmati. prāṇám anūtkrāmantam sárve prāṇā anūtkrāmanti.

The tip of the heart of this [person] as such (being about to die) flashes forth. By way of this flashing forth this Ātman steps out, whether from the sight-organ or from the top of the head, or from other parts of the body. After that (the Ātman) which steps out (upwards), steps out the breath (upwards). After the breath, which steps out (upwards), step out all living functions (upwards).

Immediately the scene changes into the moment of being born again on earth:

(7) samjñānam evānvavakrāmati. sá eṣá jñāḥ sávijñāno bhavati.²¹ tám vidyākarmáṇī samanvā-
rabhete pūrvaprajñā ca. ||

[The Ātman] steps downwards after the very agreement (*i.e.* Ātman goes down to the place or object, into which all the living functions agree to descend)²². This Ātman becomes thus conscious, provided with intellect (faculties of perception). The knowledge and deeds [of the dead person] hold on to it (Ātman) together from behind, and also the former insight (*i.e.* the insight that belonged to him in his previous life) [holds on to it from behind].

The Ātman of a dying person steps out upwards (*ut-kram*) from his body together with all his living functions; then it steps downwards (*ava-kram*) for rebirth, to which knowledge (*vidyā-*), deeds (*kárman-*) and insight (*prajñā-*) gained in the course of his previous life, hold on from behind together. This fact presupposes the notion that knowledge acquired as well as deeds performed by a person on earth, whether good or bad, are accumulated in heaven and wait for his ascension after death. It (his *ātman*) is equipped again with them only in heaven and descends accompanied by them to rebirth on earth. This idea is beyond all question a

²¹ For these two sentences the Kāṇva recension has: *savijñāno bhavati. savijñānam evānvavakrāmati* ‘He becomes provided with intellect (faculties of perception, discrimination). He steps down towards just a one provided with intellect (*i.e.* another living being as a matrix for his next existence)’.

²² For the meaning of *saṃjñāna-* cf. RV X 19,4.

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heritage from the ritualistic speculation of *iṣṭāpūrtá-* (see above, 2.), according to which one's components in the next existence are made up by each ritual acts (cf. n.19). The intermediate stage between death and rebirth is originated from the stay in heaven, which, in the Brāhmaṇas, has ended with re-dying (*punarmṛtyú-*). Yet this stage lasts now in the Upaniṣads only such a short time, that it is no longer reckoned as "a life".²³ The stress is now laid on the next existence on earth after re-dying and rebirth, cf. above 3., and below 5. A rather optimistic view is found as a faint reminiscence in the following sentences:

(8) BĀU-M IV 4,4–5 (ŚB XIV 7,2,4–5) ~ BĀU-K IV 4,3–4

tád yáthā trṇajalāyuká | tṛṇasyántam gatvātmánam upasamháraty²⁴ evám evāyám púruṣa idám (K: ātmedam) śárīram nihátyávidyāñ gamayitvātmánam upasáṁharati. || tád yáthā peśaskārī | pésaso mátrām apādáyānyán návataram kalyānátarām rūpám tanutá evám evāyám púruṣa idám (K: ātmedam) śárīram nihátyávidyāñ gamayitvānyán návataram rūpám tanute (K: navataram kalyānatarām rūpam kurute), pitryam vā gāndharvám vā brāhmám vā prājāpatyám vā dáivam vā mānuṣám vānyébhyo vā bhūtēbhyah²⁵. ||

That is, as an (inch-)worm, after having gone to the end of a grass, gathers himself (his body) up together, just so the "person" here (the living Ātman) after having struck down this body [and] having made go to the non-knowledge, gathers itself up together.²⁶ That is, as a pattern-weaving girl, after having undone the woven patterned cloth's elements, weaves [them into] another, a newer [and] more beautiful figure, just so the "person" here (the living Ātman) weaves, after having struck down this body [and] having made gone to the non-knowledge, another newer figure, [a figure] belonging to the Fathers, or to the Gandharvas, or to Brahman, or to Prajāpati, or to the gods, or to the human beings, or [a figure] for other beings.

5. Successively Yājñavalkya preaches the *kárman*-doctrine in BĀU-M IV 4,6 ~ -K IV 4,5: through good deeds (*sādhukārī*, *púṇyena kármanā*), one becomes good (*sādhuh*, *púṇyah*),

²³ This stage is called *antarā-bhāva* – 'intermediate state' in the Abhidharma texts of some Buddhist schools. Its equivalent is not attested in Pāli canon; a corresponding existence between death and rebirth is expressed there as *gandhabba-*, e.g. M I 265f., II 157. For *gandhabba-* (*gandharva-*) and *satta-* (*sattva-*, masc., cf. above n.14) see WINDISCH, *Buddha's Geburt*, Leipzig 1908, pp. 12ff.

²⁴ Kāṇva: *tṛṇasyántam gatvānyam ākramam ākramyātmánam* '... having stepped another step ...'.

²⁵ Kāṇva: *pitryam vā gāndharvam vā daivam vā prājāpatyam vā brāhmam vā vānyesām vā bhūtānām*. The dative *anyébhyo vā bhūtēbhyah* in the Mādhyandina recension seems to be used in order to express a meaning of belonging to a kin without using the Vṛddhi-form, a formation impossible from this word.

²⁶ Cf. BĀU-M IV 3,41 (ŚB XIV 7,1,41) ~ BĀU-K IV 3,36 *sá yátrāṇimánam nyéti jaráyā vopatápatā vāṇimánam nigáचhati yáthāmrám vodúmbaram vā píppalam vā bándhanāt pramucyétaivám evāyám śárīrá ātmábhýó 'ṅgebhyah sampramúcyā púnah pratinyāyám pratiyony ádravati prāṇyāivá* 'When he enters into minuteness (a minute state), due to age or suffering he goes into minuteness, —as a Mango fruit, or a Udumbra fruit, or a Pippala fig, would be released from a stalk—, just so this Ātman belonging to the body (BĀU-K: this Puruṣa), after having relieved itself completely from these limbs, it runs back in the reverse order against (towards) its origin, that is towards the vital breath'. Cf. T. GOTŌ, "Zur Lehre Śāṇḍilyas" (above n.3), p.81.

i.e. one is re-born in a good state, and through bad deeds (*pāpakārī, pāpena*), one becomes bad (*pāpah*). This theorem is to be understood as concerning a condition of one's next existence on earth after re-dying in heaven; the stay in heaven that immediately follows one's death has already become a mere intermediate stage, as mentioned above, and scarcely plays a role any more (see above 4.).

Then he points out desire (*káma*-) as the very cause of *kárman*-, consequently of the “Samsāra”. Regarding a man having no desires who transcends the “Samsāra”, he says:

(9) BĀU-M IV 4,8–9 (ŚB XIV 7,2,8–9) ~ BĀU-K IV 4,6–7

áthākāmáyamāno, yò 'kámó niśkáma ātmákáma āptá-kámo bhávati, ná tásmāt prāṇá útkrámanty. átraivá samávaníyante. bráhmaivá sán bráhmápy eti. || tát esá slóko bhavati | yadá sárve pramucyántे | kámá yè 'sya hṛdí sthitáḥ | átha mórtyo 'mýto bhavat (to read: *bhoti*) | átra bráhma sámaśnute.

Then, [if there is] a man who is not desiring,²⁷ [namely,] if [a man] becomes desireless, without desire, desirous of [only] his own self (*ātman*) [more], one who has attained already his desire, from him do not step out the vital organs [when he dies]. In this same place (in the very himself that dies), they are contracted together. Being very *brahman*, [so he] goes into *brahman*. Thereby the following stanza applies: “As soon as (or: always when) all the desires, that are located in his heart are released, then a mortal becomes immortal. Here (in this place) [he] perfectly reaches *brahman*”.

This passage describes how a living person can attain *bráhmañ*- and become *amýta*-²⁸. The word *amýta*- ‘immortal’ (in neuter singular: ‘immortality’) does not mean that someone alive does not die on earth, for which the expression would be here *amára*-, but that there is no (more) death at all. That is overcoming of *punar-mṛtyú*-, i.e. repeated death in a heavenly world resulting in rebirth on the earth, and consequently the transcendence of Samsāra. In this case the Ātman is absorbed into *bráhmañ*- in the very place where he dies. This is not only the very ideal pursued in the Vedic religion since the Brāhmaṇa period, but also what is sought after by Gotama Buddha and his disciples under the name of Nirvāna (Pāli *nibbāna*) ‘perfect annihilation’ (cf. also below, citation 14).²⁸

amýta- ‘immortal’ as a qualifier of the Ātman besides *ajára*- ‘unaging’, *amára*- ‘undying’ and *abháya*- ‘not-being afraid, unfearing’ (see above 1.3.) can thus be interpreted against the historical background of Vedic speculations. *amára*-, on the other hand, is not attested

²⁷ *akāmáyamānah* is followed and explained through the clause with *yá*-, which carries on the rest of sentence. In this interpretation a disjunct use of the nominative can be assumed, with which H. OERTEL deals: *The Syntax of cases in the narrative and descriptive prose of the Brāhmaṇas*, Heidelberg 1926.

²⁸ Cf. the expression ‘the door of immortality’: Samyutta-Nikāya I 137f. = Majjhima-Nikāya I 168f. = Vinaya I 5,7 = Dīgha-Nikāya II 39 (*amatassa d'vāram/d'vārā* in Triṣṭubh); Itivuttaka 80, Vimānavatthu V 14,27 [1035]; cf. also *dvārañ svargāya* Mahābhārata VI 17,8, *svarga-dvāra* VI 24,32 (Bhagavadgītā II 32), XII 263,45; see J. SAKAMOTO-GOTŌ “The prototype of the Story ‘Brahmā’s Request’” (*Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 41-1, 1992, pp. 474–469) p. 471 n.2. Cf. further *amata-dvāra*- “the door to nibbāna”, *amata-nibbāna*-CPD ss. vv.

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anywhere else in the Vedic literature.²⁹ This word is used in the particular sense of ‘someone alive does not die on earth’ with a clear intent to contrast it with the traditional term *amṛta-*.

6. Keeping the above-mentioned observations from the Upanisads in mind, we shall now examine the conception of *dukkha-* ‘painful (adj.); suffering (neut.)’ in early Buddhism. In the preaching of the “four noble truths” (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*) in Buddha’s first sermon, the truth of *dukkha* (*dukkha-ariyasacca-*) is defined as follows:

(10) Vinaya I 10: i 6,19 (~ Samyutta-Nikāya V 421: lvi 11,5)

idam kho pana bhikkhave dukkha ariyasaccam, jāti pi dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, vyādhi pi dukkhā, maranam pi dukkham, (SN adds here sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā pi dukkhā) appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho, yam p' iccham na labhati tam pi dukkham, saṃkhittena pañc' upādānakkhandhāpi dukkhā.

Further, oh monks, the suffering as the truth for the noble³⁰ is verily this (what follows): Birth also is painful. Aging also is painful. Sickness also is painful. Death also is painful. Union with the disagreeable (‘not dear’) ones is painful. Separation from the dear ones is painful. When one, though wishing for [something], does not obtain [it], that also is painful. Taken altogether, the five *skandhas* (constitutional branches) of acquisition also are painful.

Birth, aging, sickness and death are well known as the “four sufferings” which represent all the kinds of suffering of the human beings. It is quite natural to regard aging, sickness and death as such. But birth (*jāti-*) is hard to be rendered painful in accordance with our common sense. We are neither conscious, nor do we have any memory of our own birth. For the family and community it is a rather welcome event. The later scholastic tradition, however, considers *jāti-dukkha-* as the pain which one bears in one’s mother’s womb and at the moment of being born.³¹ This interpretation seems too forced. Considering that the three other items, aging, sickness and death, are *dukkha-* ‘painfull’ in their nature, the *jāti-* also ought to have been

²⁹ Later e.g. Manusmṛti II 148 = Viṣṇusmṛti XXX 46 (*sā [scil. jāti-] ajarāmarā*), in the meaning of ‘god’ Baudhāyana-Dharmasūtra IV 8,7 etc., cf. above, n.12.

³⁰ *ariya-* ‘noble’ (probably from ‘equipped with the tribal custom’), i.e. ‘respectable, ordinary [person]’. About this interpretation of the compound cf. K.R. NORMAN, *Collected Papers IV*, Oxford 1993, pp. 171–174 (the article was suggested to me by Prof. F. Enomoto).

³¹ Cf. Visuddhimagga pp. 498–501 (explanation of sickness *vyādhi* is lacking). On this subject which can be widely seen in the later literature including that of Buddhism, see M. HARA, “Shōku”, *Butsu no Kenkyū*. Dr. Kōshirō Tamaki Felicitation Volume, Tōkyō 1977, pp. 667–683, “A Note on the Buddha’s Birth Story”, *Indianisme et Bouddhisme*. Mélanges offerts à Mgr Etienne Lamotte, 1980, pp. 143–157. It is pointed out that the Sarvāstivādins have a remarkable tendency to interpret *jāti-dukkha-* as the suffering in one’s mother’s womb and at birth, while the original concept of *jāti* found in the Nikāyas is taken up by Vasubandhu: Y. MUROJI, “Tanjō (saisei) no teikeihyōgen wo meguru bukkyōto no shodenshō” (Various versions of the Buddhist transmission of the formula on the birth [rebirth]), *Kōyasan University, 110 Years Jubilee Volume*, 1996, pp. 181–196.

meant by Gotama Buddha not as physical suffering incidental to birth, but as something which innately causes our suffering.

7. Glossing on this “four noble truths” in citation 10, the following passage explains *jāti*-‘birth’³² as re-birth in Samsāra:

(11) Dīgha-Nikāya II 305, 6–9: xxii 18 = Majjhima-Nikāya III 249, 14–17: No.141

katamā ca bhikkhave (MN āvuso) jāti. yā tesamtesm sattānam tamhitamhi sattanikāye jāti sañjāti okkanti abhinibbatti khandhānam pātubhāvo āyatanānañ paṭilābho, ayan vuccati bhikkhave jāti.

And which is, oh monks, the birth? What is the birth of beings so-and-so in class of beings so-and-so: —to be born into existence, to step down (*okkanti*), to turn out into [something], the manifestation of the [five] *skandhas* (constitutional branches of an individual), to receive the sense organs—, this, oh monks, is called birth.³³

The word *okkanti* (: *avakrānti*, *ava-kram*), used here, presupposes the notion that a subject in Samsāra has lived in the world above before descending into a mother’s womb on earth, as we have already noted in the case of *anu-āva-krāmati* in BĀU IV 4,3 (citation 7). This term is well established throughout Pāli, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit and classical Sanskrit.³⁴

The same sentence³⁵ appears also in the explanation of the causal chain of twelve terms (*paṭiccasamuppāda*): Samyutta-Nikāya II 3: xii 2,5, Majjhima-Nikāya I 50: No.9. Further it is

³² This word does not appear in the Vedic language. In Skt., *jāti*- ‘birth’ is used especially in the meaning of ‘natural disposition, innate qualities, species, caste’. For the meaning of ‘to be born, birth’ expressed by *jāti*- in Pāli, is used *jánman*- in Vedic. In Pāli, on the other hand, this word is attested scarcely; according to PTSD and PTC, only in Sn 1018 (Pārāyaṇavagga): *ādissa jammanam brūhi* ‘Say about birth (the year of your birth)’.

³³ This quotation is followed by a description of *jarā*, *maranam*, *soko*, *paridevo*, etc., but not of *vyādhi*. Given that the above enumerated items at birth are meant as a temporal process, the original meaning of the verb *jan*ⁱ ‘to generate [an embryo which is to be born as his child] (used of a father)’ might have still been alive. See the next note.

³⁴ For *ava-kram*, see E. WINDISCH, *Buddha’s Geburt*, Leipzig 1908, p.31. An example from a medical text in addition: Caraka-Saṃhitā IV 3,3 *yadā cānayos tathāyukte samsarge śukraśoṇitasamsargam antargarbhāśayagatañ jīvo ’vakrāmati, sattvasanyprayogāt tadā garbho ’bhinirvartate* ‘And, after the union of the two (a man and a woman in good health) in such a condition is made, as soon as a living one (living ātman) steps down into the union of semen and blood located inside the placenta, then an embryo turns out into existence from the conjugation [of the materials, i.e. semen and blood] with the pure element (i.e. living ātman)’ (*sattva*-means originally perhaps the subject of a being in the Samsāra, cf. masculine *sattva*- in Buddhism, see above with n.14). *abhinirvartate* here corresponds to *abhinibbatti* in citation 11 in Pāli.

³⁵ For the development and transformation of this formula in the later Buddhist literature cf. Y. MUROJI, Various versions (above n.31).

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found, independent of the “four noble truths” as well as the “causal chain of twelve terms”, in the Cullaniddesa 147: No.257 as gloss for *jāti-* (Suttanipāta 1004, 1048, 1052).

8. The usage of *jāti-* in the sense of re-birth in Samsāra is deeply rooted in the Buddhist scriptures. Below shall be cited only a few examples from the Pāli canon. The repetition of life is regarded as suffering, because any life is destined to fall into decay and destruction in misery. A perfect release from Samsāra must be strived for. Here in Buddhism lacks a positive estimation of human life, expected in comparison with death or other lower states of existence such as in the hells.

(12) Dīgha-Nikāya II 30f.: xiv 2,18 = Saṃyutta-Nikāya II 10: xii 10,2 (in the introductory part of the Pratītyasamutpāda doctrine):

kiccham vatāyam loko āpanno, jāyati ca jīyati ca mīyati ca cavati ca uppajjati (S upapajjati) ca. atha ca pan' imassa dukkhassa nissaraṇam nappajānāti jarāmarañāassa.

Into trouble, alas, this world has fallen. Man is born, ages, dies³⁶, falls out (from heaven)³⁷, and comes out (into this world). And yet man does not discern the exit from this suffering, from aging and death.

(13) Itivuttaka 76: §83 (five kinds of omen for a languishing divine person):

yadā bhikkhave devo devakāyā cavanadhammo hoti pañca pubbanimittāni pātubhavanti. mālā milāyanti, vatthāni kilissanti, kacchehi sedā muccanti, kāye dubbaññiyaū okkamati, sake devo devāsane nābhiramati ti.

When, oh monks, a god becomes the one destined to fall out from the group of the gods, five previous signs become manifest: — Garlands languish. Clothes become dirty. Sweat is (lit.: sweats are) released from the armpits. A bad complexion appears on the body. The god does not find pleasure in [his own] divine seat.

(14) Dīgha-Nikāya II 15: xiv 1,29 (Buddha's bull-like voice at his birth, *āsabhī vācā*):

aggo 'ham asmi lokassa, jetṭho 'ham asmi lokassa, setṭho 'ham asmi lokassa, ayam antimā jāti, n' att' idāni punabbhavo.

The foremost of the world I am. The most supreme of the world I am. The best of the world I am. This is the final birth. There is now no [more] re-existence.

(15) Suttanipāta p.16, p.112 etc. etc. (for this cliché expression see PTC I 179 s.v. *apara*, I 357 s.v. *itthattāya*):

³⁶ Pāli *mīyati* ‘dies’ is used in the meaning of Old Indoar. *mriyáte*, but its form originates (or its *i* is influenced) from *mīyate* RV + (*mīyate* RV TS TB TĀ, *mīyáte* MS ŠB) ‘passes away, is injured’.

³⁷ For Pāli *cavati*, *cuti-*, see WINDISCH, *Buddha's Geburt*, p.30f. He cites also from the Skt. texts some examples in Muṇḍaka-Up, Bhagavadgītā and Mahābhārata. *pra-cyāvante* in citation 4 from the Maitrāyanī Samhitā (prose) is to be added as a very old and important occurrence, further *prá... cyavate* Taittirīya-Samhitā (prose) II 5,4,4, *prācyuta-* do. VI 1,1,5, Śatapatha-Br. I 6,4,17, *cyāvayati* Kāthaka-Samhitā XXV 5: 108,10 with its parallel in the Kapiṣṭhalakaṭha-Samhitā (prose), *cyavante*, *cyāvayanti* Jaiminīya-Br. III 301 (of the *garbha*-s from the *yoni*-). Cf. also the next citation.

khīnā jāti, vusitam brahmacariyam, katan̄ karan̄iyam, nāparam itthattāyā ti abbhaññāsi.

Extinguished is [the cause for a] birth. Lived is the *brahman*-life (*i.e.* the life of one who strives for *brāhmaṇ-* in the sense of *nibbāna*-, cf. above 5. at the end). Done is what is to be done. There is nothing more for such a state as this. So he has realized.

(16) Aṅguttara-Nikāya II 15, 27–30: iv 13 (stanza):

*sammappadhānā māradheyyādhibhuno
te asitā jātimaraṇabhayassa pāragū
te tusitā jetvā māram savāhanam te anejā
sabbam namūcibalam upātivattā te sukhitā (ti).*

Those who make right exertions conquer death. They, the unbound, are those who go to the opposite shore of fear of birth and death. They are satisfied, having defeated Death with his troops (cf. Sn 442). They are unshakable. Having overwhelmed the whole forces of the demon Namūci (cf. Nidd II 253: 602), they are blissful.

(17) Aṅguttara-Nikāya II 12, 20: iv 10 = II 52, 23: iv 49 (stanza):

sattā gacchanti saṃsāram | jātimaraṇagāmino

The living beings, who go through birth and death, go along the Samsāra.³⁸

9. It is thus concluded that *jāti* ‘birth’ among the four kinds of suffering in the “four noble truths” means originally re-birth in Samsāra, which is caused by re-dying in heaven according to the thought in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads. This enumeration of the four kinds of suffering: birth, aging, sickness, and death, reminds us now of the set of four attributes of the Ātman in Yājñavalkya’s doctrine (BĀU IV 4,30–31): *ajára-*, *amára-*, *abháya-* and *amṛta-* (see above 1.2. with citation 3; 1.3.; and 5.). The correspondence between *ajára-* ‘unaging’ and *jarā-* ‘aging’ is evident. The Buddhistic *marana*- ‘death’, *i.e.* death on earth, matches *amára-* ‘undying’ in negative wording in the Upaniṣad. *abháya-* ‘unfearing’ is put in place of *vyādhi-* ‘sickness’, a more concrete notion for our usual life. Lastly, *amṛta-* ‘immortal’, which, according to the *Weltanschauung* from Brāhmaṇa to Upaniṣad, means ‘not re-dying in heaven’, consequently no more rebirth on earth, corresponds to *jāti-* ‘birth’, *i.e.* rebirth in Samsāra in the case of the Buddhists:

³⁸ Because one does not go into the Samsāra from outside (then, the accusative would be taken as that of the goal), but is already in Samsāra, we should probably interpret this accusative as the accusative of spatial extent (or way), cf. Pāṇini II 3,5 *kālādhvanor atyantasamyoge* ‘When a complete connection (completely from the beginning end up to the terminal end, *i.e.* from beginning to end) of time and road is meant, [the accusative is used: ib. 2]’. Only few distinct examples are reported of this function, cf. C. GAEDICKE, *Der Accusativ im Veda*, Breslau 1880, pp. 82ff., J.S. SPEIJER, *Sanskrit Syntax*, Leiden 1886, pp. 40f.: § 54, B. DELBRÜCK, *Altindische Syntax*, Syntaktische Forschungen V, Halle an der Saale 1888, p. 171: §118, cf. also T. GOTŌ, “Funktionen des Akkusativs und Rektionsarten des Verbums” (*Indogermanische Syntax – Fragen und Perspektiven* –, Wiesbaden 2002, 21–42) 38f.

Yājñavalkya's... Ātman and the four kinds of suffering...

BĀU-M	BĀU-K	dukkha-ariyasacca
ajára- ‘unaging’	ajara- ‘unaging’	jāti ‘birth’
amára- ‘undying’	amara- ‘undying’	jarā ‘aging’
abháya- ‘not-fearing’	amṛta- ‘immortal’	vyādhi ‘sickness’
amṛ̥a- ‘immortal’	abhaya- ‘not-fearing’	maraṇam ‘death’

The conceptions of life and world in early Buddhism have thus inherited the reflections on birth and death found in the old Upaniṣads, and further explicated them. The predominance of the pessimistic view of life in early Buddhism (cf. above, 8.) can be explained from this historical background; it is rooted in the negative discussions about re-dying (*punar-mṛtyú-*) in the heavenly world since the Brāhmaṇa period.

The teaching of Gotama Buddha, which aims to deliver the ordinary people from their concrete suffering, tends to observe phenomena of human life more realistically than his forerunners and endeavors to elucidate the causality of existence in Saṃsāra without admitting the existence of “the eternal subject of existence”, i.e. Ātman, thus resulting in the doctrine of Pratītyasamutpāda.